



TOWN OF GRAFTON

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
Grafton Memorial Municipal Center
30 Providence Road
Grafton, MASSACHUSETTS
01519

Summary for CPC Articles 35 and 37

Article 35 - Open Space & Recreation Plan Funding Request

Project Description: The Town of Grafton's most recent Open Space & Recreation Plan was completed in 2007 and was valid through 2012. In addition to documenting existing resources facilities, the plan also analyses the town's growth and need for future open space acquisitions and recreation facilities. The Plan includes a 5 year implementation and action plan that provides guidance for future purchases and development of facilities. With an approved plan, the Town is also eligible to receive grants for open space protection, trail development, and recreational facilities. Due to the expiration of the plan, the Town is not qualified to apply for state funds or grants for open space protection or recreational facilities.

Project Funding Request: It is expected that the Open Space and Recreation Plan will cost between \$14,000 and \$17,000 based on a preliminary quote from the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission. The request of \$18,000 includes an additional \$1,000 is intended to cover additional costs for public outreach, materials, and additional tasks that may arise as part of the project.

Conclusion: The Open Space & Recreation Plan update will enable the Town to identify and prioritize open space acquisitions, opportunities to link open space resources, and recreation facility development as the town continues to grow. A number of open space acquisitions and recreation projects have been undertaken since the 2007 Open Space & Recreation Plan, and new analysis and action items are needed to ensure ongoing and future development don't fragment undeveloped areas or overburden existing recreation facilities. With the completion and the State's approval of the Open Space & Recreation Plan, the Town can apply for funds and grants to implement the plan, reducing the burden on town finances.

Article 37 - Fisherville Mill River Walk Feasibility Study

Project Description: The Fisherville Mill River Walk Feasibility Study will examine the concept for a pedestrian and bicycle friendly path along the perimeter of the site of the former Fisherville Mill as envisioned by the final report entitled "Creating a Teaching Landscape" completed in the spring of 2015. Funding from the Blackstone River Valley Heritage Corridor was obtained for the development of a master plan for the Fisherville Mill and the development of educational material promoting the area's historic and environmental resources. The River Walk was one of these elements.

As shown in the Fisherville Mill Landscape Concept Plan, the River Walk runs adjacent to the River and Fisherville Pond connecting northern portions of the site with Main Street and Mill Villages Park while



Fisherville Mill Landscape Concept Plan

providing amenities and scenic views of the river, the step dam and the mill pond.

The River Walk will also allow for the future connection of the site to the Blackstone Bikeway, whether it be an off road route across the former tow paths of the canal or an on-road route along Main Street.

While the property is currently privately owned, it is expected that the Town will obtain an easement for the River Walk to allow this to be Town facility similar to the Mill Villages Park.

Project Funding Request: It is expected that the Feasibility Study will cost \$12,500. The Planning Department has received two proposals for approximately \$10,000. The request of an additional \$2,500 is intended to cover additional costs for public outreach, materials, and additional tasks that may arise as part of the project.

Conclusion: The Fisherville River Walk Feasibility Study will continue with the Town's efforts to encourage economic development efforts in South Grafton and provide open space and recreational access to residents and visitors. The feasibility study will also enable Town Departments, Boards and Commissions with guidance as efforts to develop the Fisherville Mill site continue, ensuring public space and facilities will be an integral part of any development project. The River Walk will also serve as a facility to link the industrial history of South Grafton and the Blackstone Valley with environmental and natural resources of the area.